

Hospital dealing with increase in health insurance

The Cheyenne County Hospital Board, when they met on June 29, spent time discussing health insurance costs. This year, the health insurance went up 7.6 percent.

Last year, the hospital supplemented a total of \$500 to the employees' insurance. This, Les Lacy, hospital administrator said, was \$100 more than recommended by Great Plains Health Alliance, the company which leases the hospital. This year, Great Plains is recommending \$450 as the hospital's portion.

As the administrator, he said, it is his position to stay at the recommended amount because of the financial position of the hospital. Jackie John, area director for Great Plains, said that the insurance was put out for bid and no bids were received. She said she thought this is due to the uncertainty with the healthcare reform.

Kari Gilliland, board member, asked if the hospital was going to reduce the amount covered on insurance if the employees do receive a cost of living increase? Mr. Lacy pointed out that employees have continued to receive annual increases.

Jane Young, board member, asked how many employees were on the insurance and what the amount would be for the extra \$50? However, those numbers were not available.

The out-of-pocket expense for the family plan with the \$1500/\$3000 deductible is \$745 and the single plan is \$89. For the \$3000/\$6000 deductible, the family plan is \$629 and the single plan is \$36.

Mrs. Gilliland said she still felt like the amount should stay at the \$500. If we are trying to keep the number of un-insured down, she said, then we need to help take care of the employees.

"The employees of the hospital are the asset to the hospital," she said. "I feel that taking away \$50 per employee is not that much and is punitive."

When the health insurance information comes out, the board said they would like to know so there is more time to look at it. It would also be nice for the employees to have more time so they can make a decision without the pressure of having to make it immediately.

Mrs. Gilliland said the health insurance needs to be reviewed annually by the board. Mrs. John said the compensation can still be done even though the employees have already decided whether they want the insurance or not.

Budget

Mr. Lacy handed out the board budget for the coming year. This budget had been prepared to present to the commissioners as a request for the hospital board in the county budgeting process.

When he went to the commissioners, he asked for \$670,000. The cost report settlement for both Medicare and Medicaid is \$150,000 which is much less than the administrator was hoping for. The main reason for less settlement is changing payor mix - seeing more patients that are not Medicare.

Jerry Toler board president, asked why it is hitting the hospital more this year when looking back at the past five years, the volume hasn't changed that much.

Mr. Lacy explained that part is that the hospital is doing services such as obstetrics, county health and the Lifeline which are not allowable costs in the Medicare Cost Report. However these services are needed by the community.

The board said they did not want to plan for a service that is going to hurt the hospital and needed to

keep this in mind as they look at the expansion project.

Financials

In reporting financials of the facility, Mr. Lacy said that the hospital continues to be in a weak position with cash.

The hospital owes itself \$560,000 to funded depreciation, he said, and the board is paying \$15,000 per month to help rebuild this.

The total patient service revenue was down for the month again due to charges and volume. Mr. Lacy reported that several cost to charge ratios need to be adjusted with rate changes where possible. The St. Francis Clinic was just below budget on revenue for the month and the Bird City Clinic was just above budget.

Statistics:

The overall volume in the hospital and clinics was down some for the month of May. The numbers were down at the Bird City clinic which is out of the ordinary but Erika Zimbelman said it was slower this month.

Endoscopies are staying at a good number; X-rays and CT scans were up for the month.

Tax credits/grants

Mr. Lacy said he had a phone message to call on the tax credits. The county, he said, should be finding out anytime if their application was accepted.

The facility was approved for \$90,000 on the Primary Care Clinic Grant and a portion of this is designated for prescription drug coverage.

Candi Douthit wrote a grant to the Sunflower Foundation for replacement of the ITV equipment and was awarded \$18,374.

Department reports

Deanna Grice, environmental services manager, includes herself, Donna Draper; Sue Rethke is working part-time in housekeeping and part-time in purchasing. They hired Ray Martinez of Bird City who is part-time and works from 1 to 6 p.m.

Every three months they shampoo the clinic carpets.

Mr. Toler said he was in the hospital and commented on the cleanliness and how clean the bathroom was beside the lab. He feels they do an excellent job!

Amelia Zuege, outpatient services/surgery manager, said she works with all the outpatient doctors that come to the hospital. She sets up their clinics, make sure the patients have all their paperwork, lab work is done and contacts the patients. She also coordinates the nuclear medicine, mammography and DEXA scans. She has surgeries with Dr. Frankum and Dr. Uyemura. She also orders the medicine for the pharmacy.

Julie Brunk assists on surgery days, Dr. Johnson days and other busy clinic days.

Mr. Toler asked if she hears much complaining from the patients on surgery days? She said they do mention that it would be nice not to have to share a room, even though there is a curtain you can still hear what is being said on

the other side. She said most are nice about it and they understand but just say it would be better not to have to share rooms. It would also comply with HIPAA regulations.

Mr. Toler asked if the doctors complain any on the size of the operating room or the facilities? She said the doctors are not really complainers but they do mention that it would be nice to have rooms to see the consults in instead of the emergency room. If the emergency room is busy then she has to try and find a room; sometimes that is the chapel.

If the operating room was bigger, it would help during c-sections as it does get tight in there with all the equipment and staff.

Scholarship support

Mr. Lacy reported on scholarship support. It would be for those in schools pursuing a licensure or professional certification.

A loan prime plus 3 percent, 1 year of service for 1 year of support. The escape would be for death or disability.

The repayment would be due on exit if not fulfilled. A 'B' average would need to be maintained.

We would allow the option of a buyout from another facility, Mr. Lacy said, but look for recovery of interest expense.

In other business

In other business:

A letter was read from Shawn Alsup and his family that gave a memorial donation to the hospital from the Margaret Alsup Trust and Friends.

County health nurse, Mrs. Bandel, attended the May 28 commissioner meeting to visit with them about the county employee program. She had just completed the physical tests and the labs were done in conjunction with the health fair.

Positive feedback was received from the commissioners and they would like to continue the program, encouraging other employees to participate.

The administrator reported that a full-activation drill for HazMat and mass casualty was held a couple of weeks ago. It involved the hospital, emergency medical service and fireman. Direct costs associated with the drill are recoverable from grant funding, backfill costs are not paid.

Erika Lacy is volunteering some time and helping the administrator.

A meet and greet will be held for a cardiologist coming through Health One.

Executive session

Administrator Lacy called for 10 minutes executive session to discuss personnel and real estate. No decision was made upon coming out of the session.

Next meeting

The next hospital board meeting will be held at 3 p.m. on Thursday, July 22, in the clinic basement meeting room, St. Francis.

Editor's note: The above information was taken from the unapproved minutes of the June 29 hospital board meeting.

Club Clip

McDonald Senior Citizens

Thirty-six senior citizens enjoyed the July 5 dinner and meeting of the McDonald Senior Citizens. Joan Tongish welcomed the guests, especially mentioning Pastor Greg and Susan Moyer of Olathe.

Marlene Johnson gave a reading, and Pastor Moyer led the prayer. Anniversaries and birthdays were acknowledged. The tables were decorated in a Fourth of July theme with flags and patriotic napkins and colors. After the delicious dinner, bingo was played with Phyllis Wingfield calling the games. The blackout game was won by Gladys Cullum of St. Francis.

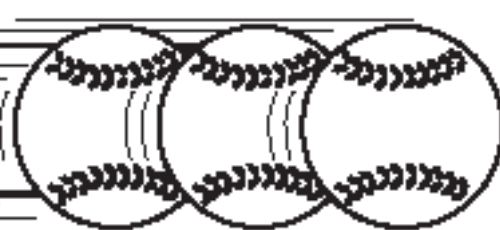
At the business meeting Joan thanked everyone who had helped with the dinner and also all who had remembered her with cards and phone calls while she was in the hospital. The secretary's and treasurer's reports were accepted as read. Joan also thanked Ray Johnson for mowing. It was mentioned that the screen door is not closing properly and will need to be looked at.

August committees were announced. They are Poem and Prayer; Pastor Mark Adams; Prizes: Marlene Johnson; Bingo: Leonard Vyzourek; Kitchen Help: Phyllis Wilkinson, Marlene Johnson and Betty Lewis.



THE BIRTHDAY GIRLS had something for everyone at the Bird City Senior Center. (l to r) Hulda Dorsch, Becky Davison, Marlene Young and Mary Dorsch celebrated their July birthdays on Monday.

Times staff photo by Sydney Busse



BATTER UP!



C-Team Boys: Back row, left to right - Alejandro Martinez, CJ Antholz, Reece Leonard, Devon Janicke, Jacob Serrano, and Jordan Janicke; front row: Jorge Gonzalez, Ivan Kemp, Jorge Chacon, and Derek Vandike.

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Has your 11 to 18 year-old had his or her recommended vaccines?

Take advantage of our "Summer Vaccination Event"

July 28 - 30, 2010
Cheyenne County Health Department
8:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.
No appointment necessary

For more information and to see which vaccines your child needs contact the Cheyenne County Health Department at 785-332-2381
Mila Bandel, RN - County Health Nurse

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NOTICE OF BUDGET HEARING

The governing body of Bird City, Kansas, Cheyenne County, will meet on August 13, 2010 at 8:00 AM at Wesleyan Church for the purpose of hearing and answering objections of taxpayers relating to the proposed use of all funds and the amount of tax to be levied. Detailed budget information is available at 2995 East Highway 36 and will be available at this hearing.

FUND	Prior Year Actual 2009		Current Year Estimate for 2010		Proposed Budget Year for 2011	
	Expenditures	Actual Tax Rate*	Expenditures	Actual Tax Rate*	Expenditures	Actual Tax Rate*
General	12,932	0.951	17,054	1.024	18,591	9,870
Debt Service						
Real Estate Revenue			2,000		11,000	
Totals	12,932	0.951	19,054	1.024	29,591	9,870
Less: Transfers	0		0		0	
Net Expenditures	12,932		19,054		29,591	
Total Tax Levied	9,870		9,870		9,870	
Assessed Valuation	10,382,649		9,642,752		9,632,841	

	2008		2009		2010	
Outstanding Indebtedness, Jan 1,	0	0	0	0	0	0
G.O. Bonds	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revenue Bonds	0	0	0	0	0	0
No-Fund Warrant	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lease Pur. Princ.	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0

*Tax rates are expressed in mills.
Phyllis D. Carson
Clerk